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Pupil Transportation for School Choice

Districts receiving funds under Title I-A are required to make public school choice available to all students in Title I-A schools identified for improvement status. Students who are enrolled in Title I-A schools are eligible to transfer to another school if their school has been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The district is responsible for paying all or a portion of the transportation necessary for students to attend their new schools. Certain restrictions apply:

1. Districts with schools in Year 1 of School Improvement with no schools that are required to offer Supplemental Educational Services (SES) must make available the full twenty (20) percent set-aside for choice-related transportation.
2. Districts with schools who are beyond Year I, or schools that must offer both SES and public school choice, may spend no less than an amount equal to five (5) percent of the Title I-A allowance on transportation alone if the requests for transportation meet or exceed 5 percent of the allocation.
3. A district may use Title I-A funds, as well as other allowable federal, state, local, and private resources to pay for the transportation needed to implement the Title I-A school choice requirement. A district may use its Title V-A funds and funds transferred into Title I-A or Title V-A from other federal Title programs that allow "Transferability."
4. Some districts may have no schools available to which students can transfer. This situation might occur when all schools at a grade level are in school improvement, when the district has only a single school at that grade level, or when a district's schools are so remote from one another that choice is not practicable. If other potential school choices are located outside a district-designated boundary, these zones may not be used to prevent student transfers. In this case:
 - a. The district must, to the extent practicable, enter into cooperative agreements with other districts in the area.
 - b. The district may choose to offer SES to students attending schools in the first year of improvement who cannot be given the opportunity to change schools, but this is not required.
5. A district may have a general policy of not providing transportation to students who live within a certain distance of their schools. For example, if a district only transports students who live more than a mile from a school, the district would not be required to provide transportation to students who elect to transfer within one mile of their home.

"It is the mission of the Office of Public Instruction to improve teaching and learning through communication, collaboration, advocacy, and accountability to those we serve."

6. A district has latitude in deciding which options to provide eligible students. The district may establish zones based upon geographic location and fully fund transportation to different schools within a zone, which allows the district to offer more than one choice of school while ensuring that transportation can be reasonably provided or arranged.
7. The Title I-A "supplement not supplant" requirement applies to transportation funds. For example, if a district is required by state or local statute to provide transportation to students who choose to transfer to another school under an existing choice plan, it may not use Title I-A funds to supplant the state or local monies that the district would otherwise use to provide transportation, even though transportation costs are generally an allowable use of Title I-A funds.